

R657. Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources.

R657-10. Taking Cougar.

R657-10-1. Purpose and Authority.

(1) Under authority of Sections 23-14-18 and 23-14-19 of the Utah Code, the Wildlife Board has established this rule for taking and pursuing cougar.

(2) Specific dates, areas, number of permits, limits, and other administrative details which may change annually are published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

R657-10-2. Definitions.

(1) Terms used in this rule are defined in Section 23-13-2.

(2) In addition:

(a) "Canned hunt" means that a cougar is treed, cornered, held at bay or its ability to escape is otherwise restricted for the purpose of allowing a person who was not a member of the initial hunting party to arrive and take the cougar.

(b) "Cougar" means Puma concolor, commonly known as mountain lion, lion, puma, panther or catamount.

(c) "Cougar pursuit permit" means a permit that authorizes a person to pursue cougar during designated seasons.

(d) "Evidence of sex" means the sex organs of a cougar, including a penis, scrotum or vulva.

(e) "Green pelt" means the untanned hide or skin of any cougar.

(f) "Kitten" means a cougar less than one year of age.

(g) "Limited entry hunt" means any hunt listed in the hunt tables of the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar, which is identified as limited entry and does not include harvest objective hunts.

(h) "Limited entry permit" means any permit obtained for a limited entry hunt by any means, including conservation permits and sportsman permits.

(i) "Pursue" means to chase, tree, corner or hold a cougar at bay.

(j) "Split unit" means a cougar hunting unit that begins as a limited entry unit then transitions into a harvest objective unit.

(k) "Waiting period" means a specified period of time that a person who has obtained a cougar permit must wait before applying for any other cougar permit.

R657-10-3. Permits for Taking Cougar.

(1)(a) To harvest a cougar, a person must first obtain a valid limited entry cougar permit or a harvest objective cougar permit for the specified management units as provided in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(b) Any person who obtains a limited entry cougar permit or a harvest objective cougar permit may pursue cougar on the unit for which the permit is valid.

(2) To pursue cougar, a person must first obtain a valid cougar pursuit permit from a division office. A cougar pursuit permit does not allow a person to kill a cougar.

(3) A person may not apply for or obtain more than one cougar permit for the same season, except:

(a) as provided in Subsection R657-10-25(3); or

(b) if the person is unsuccessful in the limited entry drawing, the person may purchase a harvest objective permit.

(4) Any cougar permit purchased after the season opens is not valid until seven days after the date of purchase.

(5) To obtain a cougar limited entry permit, harvest objective permit, or pursuit permit, a person must possess a Utah hunting or combination license.

R657-10-4. Purchase of Permit by Mail.

(1) A person may obtain a cougar pursuit permit or cougar harvest objective permit by mail by sending the following information to any division office: full name, complete mailing address, phone number, date of birth, weight, height, sex, color of hair and eyes, driver's license number (if available), proof of hunter education certification, proof of valid hunting or combination license or the corresponding fee.

(2)(a) Personal checks, cashier's checks, or money orders are accepted.

(b) Personal checks drawn on an out-of-state account are not accepted.

(c) Checks must be made payable to the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

R657-10-5. Hunting Hours.

Cougar may be taken or pursued only between one-half hour before official sunrise through one-half hour after official sunset.

R657-10-6. Firearms and Archery Tackle.

A person may use the following to take cougar:

(1) any firearm not capable of being fired fully automatic;

(2) a bow and arrows; and

(3) a crossbow as provided in Rule R657-12.

R657-10-7. Traps and Trapping Devices.

(1) Cougar may not be taken with a trap, snare or any other trapping device, except as authorized by the Division of Wildlife.

(2) Cougar accidentally caught in any trapping device must be released unharmed, and must not be pursued or taken.

(3)(a) Written permission must be obtained from a division representative to remove the carcass of a cougar from any trapping device.

(b) The carcass shall remain the property of the state of Utah and must be surrendered to the division.

R657-10-8. State Parks.

(1) Hunting of any wildlife is prohibited within the boundaries of all state park areas except those designated by the Division of Parks and Recreation in Section R651-614-4.

(2) Hunting with a rifle, handgun or muzzleloader in park areas designated open is prohibited within one mile of all park facilities including buildings, camp or picnic sites, overlooks, golf courses, boat ramps and developed beaches.

(3) Hunting with shotguns and archery tackle is prohibited within one quarter mile of the above stated areas.

R657-10-9. Prohibited Methods.

(1) Cougar may be taken or pursued only during open seasons and using methods prescribed in this rule and the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar. Otherwise, under the Wildlife Resources Code, it is unlawful for any person to possess, capture, kill, injure, drug, rope, trap, snare or in any way harm or transport cougar.

(2) After a cougar has been pursued, chased, treed, cornered or held at bay, a person may not, in any manner, restrict or hinder the animal's ability to escape.

(3) A person may not engage in a canned hunt.

(4) A person may not take any wildlife from an airplane or any other airborne vehicle or device or any motorized terrestrial or aquatic vehicle, including snowmobiles and other recreational vehicles.

(5) Electronic locating equipment may not be used to locate cougars wearing electronic radio devices.

R657-10-10. Spotlighting.

(1) Except as provided in Section 23-13-17:

(a) a person may not use or cast the rays of any spotlight, headlight or other artificial light to locate protected wildlife while having in possession a firearm or other weapon or device that could be used to take or injure protected wildlife; and

(b) the use of a spotlight or other artificial light in a field, woodland or forest where protected wildlife are generally found is prima facie evidence of attempting to locate protected wildlife.

(2) The provisions of this section do not apply to:

(a) the use of the headlights of a motor vehicle or other artificial light in a usual manner where there is no attempt or intent to locate protected wildlife; or

(b) a person licensed to carry a concealed weapon in accordance with Title 53, Chapter 5, Part 7 of the Utah Code, provided the person is not utilizing the concealed weapon to hunt or take wildlife.

R657-10-11. Party Hunting.

A person may not take a cougar for another person.

R657-10-12. Use of Dogs.

(1) Dogs may be used to take or pursue cougar only during open seasons as provided in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(2) The owner and handler of dogs used to take or pursue cougar must have a valid cougar permit or cougar pursuit permit in possession while engaged in taking or pursuing cougar.

(3) When dogs are used in the pursuit of a cougar, the licensed hunter intending to take the cougar must be present when the dogs are released and must continuously participate in the hunt thereafter until the hunt is completed.

(4) When dogs are used to take cougar and there is not an open pursuit season, the owner and handler of the dogs must have a valid pursuit permit and be

accompanied by a licensed hunter as provided in Subsection (3), or have a cougar permit.

R657-10-13. Tagging Requirements.

(1) The carcass of a cougar must be tagged with a temporary possession tag before the carcass is moved from or the hunter leaves the site of kill as provided in Section 23-20-30.

(2) A person may not hunt or pursue a cougar after any of the notches have been removed from the tag or the tag has been detached from the permit.

(3) The temporary possession tag:

(a) must remain attached to the pelt or unskinned carcass until the permanent possession tag is attached; and

(b) is only valid for 48 hours after the date of kill.

(4) A person may not possess a cougar pelt or unskinned carcass without a valid permanent possession tag affixed to the pelt or unskinned carcass. This provision does not apply to a person in possession of a properly tagged carcass or pelt within 48 hours after the kill, provided the person was issued and is in possession of a valid permit.

R657-10-14. Evidence of Sex and Age.

(1) Evidence of sex must remain attached to the carcass or pelt of each cougar until a permanent tag has been attached by the division.

(2) The pelt and skull must be presented to the division in an unfrozen condition to allow the division to gather management data.

(3) It is mandatory that a tooth (PM1) be removed by the division at the time of permanent tagging to be used for aging purposes.

(4) The division may seize any pelt not accompanied by its skull or not having sufficient evidence of biological sex designation attached.

R657-10-15. Permanent Tag.

(1)(a) Each cougar must be taken by the permit holder to a conservation officer or division office within 48 hours after the date of kill to have a permanent possession tag affixed to the pelt or unskinned carcass and for the removal of a tooth.

(b) After regular business hours, on weekends, or on holidays, a conservation officer may be reached by contacting the local police dispatch office.

(2) A person may not possess a green pelt after the 48-hour check-in period, or ship a green pelt out of Utah, or present a green pelt to a taxidermist if the green pelt does not have a permanent possession tag attached.

R657-10-16. Transporting Cougar.

Cougar that have been legally taken may be transported by the permit holder provided the cougar is properly tagged and the permittee possesses the appropriate permit.

R657-10-17. Exporting Cougar from Utah.

(1) A person may export a legally taken cougar or its parts if that person has a valid permit and the cougar is properly tagged with a permanent possession tag.

(2) A person may not ship or cause to be shipped from Utah, a cougar pelt without first obtaining a shipping permit issued by an authorized division representative.

R657-10-18. Donating.

(1) A person may donate protected wildlife or their parts to another person as provided in Section 23-20-9.

(2) A green pelt of any cougar donated to another person must have a permanent possession tag affixed.

(3) The written statement of donation must be retained with the pelt.

R657-10-19. Purchasing or Selling.

(1) Legally obtained, tanned cougar hides may be purchased or sold.

(2) A person may not purchase, sell, offer for sale, or barter a tooth, claw, paw, or skull of any cougar.

R657-10-20. Waste of Wildlife.

(1) A person may not waste or permit to be wasted or spoiled any protected wildlife or their parts.

(2) The skinned carcass of a cougar may be left in the field and does not constitute waste of wildlife.

R657-10-21. Livestock Depredation and Human Health and Safety.

(1) If a cougar is harassing, chasing, disturbing, harming, attacking or killing livestock, or has committed such an act within the past 72 hours:

(a) in depredation cases, the livestock owner, an immediate family member or an employee of the owner on a regular payroll, and not hired specifically to take cougar, may kill the cougar;

(b) a landowner or livestock owner may notify the division of the depredation or human health and safety concerns, who shall authorize a local hunter to take the offending cougar or notify a USDA, Wildlife Services specialist; or

(c) the livestock owner may notify a USDA, Wildlife Services specialist of the depredation who may take the depredating cougar.

(2) Depredating cougar may be taken at any time by a USDA, Wildlife Services specialist, supervised by the Wildlife Services program, while acting in the performance of the person's assigned duties and in accordance with procedures approved by the division.

(3) A depredating cougar may be taken with any weapon authorized for taking cougar.

(4)(a) Any cougar taken pursuant to this section must be delivered to a division office or employee within 72 hours.

(b) In accordance with Subsection (1)(a) the cougar shall remain the property of the state, except the division may issue a cougar damage permit to a person who has killed a depredating cougar in accordance with this section, if that person wishes to maintain possession of the cougar.

(c) A person may acquire only one cougar annually.

(5)(a) Hunters interested in taking depredating cougar as provided in Subsection (1)(b) may contact the division.

(b) Hunters will be contacted by the division to take depredating cougar as needed.

R657-10-22. Survey.

Each permittee who is contacted for a survey about their cougar hunting experience should participate in the survey regardless of success. Participation in the survey helps the division evaluate population trends, harvest success and collect other valuable information.

R657-10-23. Taking Cougar.

(1)(a) A person may take only one cougar during the season and from the area specified on the permit.

(b) Limited entry permits may be obtained by following the application procedures provided in this rule and the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(c) Harvest objective permits may be purchased on a first-come, first-served basis as provided in proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(2) A person may not:

(a) take or pursue a female cougar with kittens or kittens with spots; or

(b) repeatedly pursue, chase, tree, corner, or hold at bay, the same cougar during the same day after the cougar has been released.

(3) Any cougar may be taken during the prescribed seasons, except a kitten with spots, or any cougar accompanied by kittens, or any cougar accompanied by an adult.

(4) A person may not take a cougar wearing a radio collar from any areas that are published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(5) The division may authorize hunters who have obtained a limited entry cougar permit to take cougar in a specified area of the state in the interest of protecting wildlife from depredation.

(6) Season dates, closed areas, harvest objective permit areas and limited entry permit areas are published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(7)(a) A person who obtains a limited entry cougar permit on a split unit may hunt on all harvest objective units after the date split units transition into harvest objective units. The split unit transition date is provided in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(b) A person who obtains a limited entry cougar permit on a split unit and chooses to hunt on any harvest objective unit after the transition date is subject to all harvest objective unit closure requirements provided in Sections R657-10-34 and 657-10-35.

R657-10-24. Extended and Preseason Hunts.

(1) An extended or preseason hunt may be authorized by the division on selected cougar management units to control depredation or nuisance problems.

(2) The director may authorize only those hunters who drew a limited entry permit or have purchased a harvest objective permit to hunt on that management unit and participate in a preseason or extended season hunt.

R657-10-25. Cougar Pursuit.

(1) Cougar may be pursued only by persons who have obtained a valid cougar pursuit permit. The cougar pursuit permit does not allow a person to kill a cougar.

(2) A person may not:

(a) take or pursue a female cougar with kittens or kittens with spots;
(b) repeatedly pursue, chase, tree, corner or hold at bay, the same cougar during the same day; or

(c) possess a firearm or any device that could be used to kill a cougar while pursuing cougar.

(i) The weapon restrictions set forth in the subsection do not apply to a person licensed to carry a concealed weapon in accordance with Title 53, Chapter 5, Part 7 of the Utah Code, provided the person is not utilizing or attempting to utilize the concealed weapon to injure or kill cougar.

(3) If eligible, a person who has obtained a cougar pursuit permit may also obtain a limited entry cougar permit or harvest objective cougar permit.

(4) Cougar may be pursued only on limited entry units or harvest objective units during the dates provided in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(5) A cougar pursuit permit is valid on a calendar year basis.

(6) A person must possess a valid hunting or combination license to obtain a cougar pursuit permit.

R657-10-26. General Application Information.

(1) A person must possess or obtain a valid hunting or combination license to apply for or obtain a cougar limited entry permit.

(2) A person may not apply for or obtain more than one cougar permit for the same year.

(3) Limited entry cougar permits are valid only for the limited entry management unit and for the specified season provided in the hunt tables of the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

R657-10-27. Waiting Period.

(1) Any person who obtained a limited entry permit valid for the current season may not apply for a permit for a period of three seasons.

(2) Any person who draws a limited entry permit for the current season may not apply for a permit for a period of three season.

(3) Waiting periods are not incurred as a result of purchasing harvest objective permits.

R657-10-28. Application Procedure.

(1) Applications are available from license agents, division offices, and through the division's Internet address.

(2)(a) Group applications are not accepted. A person may not apply more than once annually.

(b) Applicants may select up to three management unit choices when applying for limited entry cougar permits. Management unit choices must be listed in order of preference.

(3)(a) Applications must be mailed by the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking and pursuing cougar.

(b) If an error is found on the application, the applicant may be contacted for correction.

(c) The division reserves the right to correct applications.

(4)(a) Late applications received by the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking and pursuing cougar will not be considered in the drawing, but will be processed for the purpose of entering data into the Division's draw database to provide:

(i) future pre-printed applications;

(ii) notification by mail of late application and other draw opportunities; and

(iii) re-evaluation of Division or third-party errors.

(b) The handling fee will be used to process the late application. Any Utah hunting or combination license fee submitted with the application will not be refunded and the license will be issued. Any permit fees submitted with the application will be refunded.

(c) Late applications received after the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking and pursuing cougar will not be processed and will be returned.

(5) Any person who applies for a hunt that occurs on private land is responsible for obtaining written permission from the landowner to access the property. To avoid disappointment and wasting the permit and fee if access is not obtained, hunters should get written permission before applying. The division does not guarantee access and does not have the names of landowners where hunts occur.

(6) Only a resident may apply for or obtain a resident permit and only a nonresident may apply for or obtain a nonresident permit, except as provided in Section R657-10-30.

(7) To apply for a resident permit, a person must establish residency at the time of purchase.

(8) The posting date of the drawing shall be considered the purchase date of a permit.

R657-10-29. Fees.

(1) Each application must include:

(a) the permit fee;

(b) the nonrefundable handling fee; and

(c) the Utah hunting or combination license fee, if the applicant does not possess one of the licenses.

(2) Permits are mailed to successful applicants.

(3)(a) Unsuccessful applicants, who applied in the drawing and who applied with a check or money order, will receive a refund in December.

(b) Unsuccessful applicants, who applied with a credit or debit card, will not be charged for a permit.

(c) The handling fees and Utah hunting or combination license fee are nonrefundable.

R657-10-30. Drawing and Remaining Permits.

(1) If permits remain after all choices have been evaluated separately for residents and nonresidents, a second evaluation shall be done allowing cross-over usage of remaining resident and nonresident permit quotas.

(2) Applicants will be notified by mail or e-mail of drawing results on the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar. The drawing results will be posted on the division's Internet address.

(3) Beginning on the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar, residents or nonresidents may purchase any of the remaining permits.

(4) Any limited entry cougar permit purchased after the season opens is not valid until seven days after the date of purchase.

(5) Limited entry permits remaining after the drawing may be obtained on a first-come, first-served basis as provided in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(6) Waiting periods do not apply to the purchase of remaining limited entry permits after the drawing. However, waiting periods are incurred as a result of purchasing remaining permits after the drawing. Therefore, if a remaining permit is purchased in the current year, waiting periods will be in effect when applying for limited entry permits in the drawing in following years.

(7)(a) An applicant may withdraw their application for the limited entry cougar permit drawing by requesting such in writing by the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(b) The applicant must send their notarized signature with a statement requesting that their application be withdrawn to Utah Wildlife Administrative Services, P.O. Box 30389, Salt Lake City, Utah 84130-0389.

(c) Handling fees and Utah hunting or combination license fees will not be refunded.

(8)(a) An applicant may amend their application for the limited entry cougar permit drawing by requesting such in writing by the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(b) The applicant must send their notarized signature with a statement requesting that their application be amended to Utah Wildlife Administrative Services, P.O. Box 30389, Salt Lake City, Utah 84130-0389.

(c) The applicant must identify in their statement the requested amendment to their application.

(d) If the application is amended and that amendment results in an error, the division reserves the right to reject the entire application.

R657-10-31. Bonus Points.

(1) A bonus point is awarded for:

(a) a valid unsuccessful application when applying for a limited entry permit in the cougar drawing; or

(b) a valid application when applying for a bonus point in the cougar drawing.

(2) bonus points are awarded only to applicants eligible to receive a limited entry cougar permit and consistent with subsection (1).

(3) The purchase of a harvest objective permit will not affect bonus points.

(4)(a) A person may apply for one cougar bonus point each year, except a person may not apply in the drawing for both a limited entry cougar permit and a cougar bonus point in the same year.

(b) A person may not apply for a bonus point if that person is ineligible to apply for a permit.

(c) Group applications will not be accepted when applying for bonus points.

(5)(a) Each applicant receives a random drawing number for:

(i) the current valid limited entry cougar application; and

(ii) each bonus point accrued.

(b) The applicant will retain the lowest random number for the drawing.

(6)(a) Fifty percent of the permits for each hunt unit will be reserved for applicants with bonus points.

(b) Based on the applicant's first choice, the reserved permits will be designated by a random drawing number to eligible applicants with the greatest number of bonus points.

(c) If reserved permits remain, the reserved permits will be designated by random number to eligible applicants with the next greatest number of bonus points.

(d) The procedure in Subsection (c) will continue until all reserved permits have been issued or no applications for that hunt unit remain.

(e) Any reserved permits remaining and any applicants who were not selected for reserved permits will be returned to the drawing.

(7) Bonus points are forfeited if a person obtains a limited entry cougar permit except as provided in Subsection (7).

(8) Bonus points are not forfeited if:

(a) a person is successful in obtaining a Conservation Permit; or

(b) a person obtains a harvest objective cougar permit.

(9) Bonus points are not transferable.

(10) Bonus points are tracked using social security numbers or Division-issued hunter identification numbers.

R657-10-32. Harvest Objective General Information.

(1) Harvest objective permits are valid only for the open harvest objective management units and for the specified seasons published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(2) Harvest objective permits are not valid in a specified management unit after the harvest objective has been met for that specified management unit.

R657-10-33. Harvest Objective Permit Sales.

(1) Harvest objective permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis beginning on the date published in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(2) Any cougar permit purchased after the season opens is not valid until seven days after the date of purchase.

(3) A person must possess a valid hunting or combination license to obtain a Harvest objective permit.

R657-10-34. Harvest Objective Unit Closures.

(1) To hunt in a harvest objective unit, a hunter must call 1-888-668-LION or visit the division's website to verify that the cougar management unit is still open. The phone line and website will be updated each day by 12 noon. Updates become effective the following day thirty minutes before official sunrise.

(2) Harvest objective units are open to hunting until:

(a) the cougar harvest objective for that unit is met; or

(b) the end of the hunting season as provided in the proclamation of the Wildlife Board for taking cougar.

(3) Upon closure of a harvest objective unit, a hunter may not take or pursue cougar except as provided in Section R657-10-25.

R657-10-35. Harvest Objective Unit Reporting.

(1) Any person taking a cougar with a harvest objective permit must report to the division, within 48 hours, where the cougar was taken and have a permanent tag affixed pursuant to Section R657-10-15.

(2) Failure to accurately report the correct harvest objective management unit where the cougar was killed is unlawful.

(3) Any conviction for failure to accurately report, or aiding or assisting in the failure to accurately report as required in Subsection (1) shall be considered prima facie evidence of a knowing, intentional or reckless violation for purposes of permit suspension.

R657-10-36. Wildlife Management Areas.

(1) A person may not use motor vehicles on division-owned wildlife management areas closed to motor vehicle use during the winter without first obtaining written authorization from the appropriate division regional office.

(2) The division may, in its sole discretion, authorize limited motor vehicle access to its wildlife management areas closed to such use during the winter provided:

(a) the person seeking access possesses a valid cougar permit for the area;

(b) motor vehicle access is necessary to effectively utilize the cougar permit; and

(c) motor vehicle access will not interfere with wintering wildlife or wildlife habitat.

R657-10-37. Poaching-Reported Reward Permits.

(1) For purposes of this section, "successful prosecution" means the screening and filing of charges for the poaching incident.

(2) Any person who provides information leading to another person's arrest and successful prosecution for wanton destruction of a cougar on a limited entry cougar unit, under Section 23-20-4, may receive a permit from the division to hunt cougar on the same limited-entry cougar unit where the reported violation occurred, as provided in Subsection (3).

(3)(a) The division may issue poaching-reported reward permits only in limited-entry cougar units that have more than 10 total permits allocated.

(b) The division may issue only one poaching-reported reward permit per limited-entry cougar unit per year.

(4)(a) The division may issue only one poaching-reported reward permit for any one animal illegally taken.

(b) No more than one poaching-reported reward permit shall be issued to any one person per successful prosecution.

(c) No more than one cougar poaching-reported reward permit shall be issued to any one person in any one cougar season.

(5)(a) Poaching-reported reward permits may only be issued to the person who provides the most pertinent information leading to a successful prosecution. Permits are not transferrable.

(b) If information is received from more than one person, the director of the division shall make a determination based on the facts of the case, as to which person provided the most pertinent information leading to the successful prosecution in the case.

(c) The person providing the most pertinent information shall qualify for the poaching-reported reward permit.

(6) Any person who receives a poaching-reported reward permit must possess a Utah hunting or combination license and otherwise be eligible to hunt and obtain cougar permits as provided in all rules and regulations of the Wildlife Board and the Wildlife Resources Code.

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